

COUNTY BOROUGH OF DUDLEY

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1940.



Health Department,
"The Firs",
Dudley.

December, 1941.

To the Chairmen and Members of the
Health, Maternity and Child Welfare and
Mental Deficiency Committees.

Messrs. Chairmen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Annual
Report on the Health of the Borough for the year 1940.

The report is an interim one and is still further
abridged compared with that for 1939.

The year has been a heavy one for the staff, the
burden of Civil Defence duties having added considerably
to their work. However, the work of the personal health
services has been maintained with very little curtailment,
since they are of such great importance during time of war.

My thanks are due to the loyal assistance of the
nursing and clerical staffs and to all voluntary Welfare
Workers for their valued help.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The Registrar-General's estimate of the resident population at mid-year 1940, was 57,740, a decrease of 4,360 on his estimated figure for mid-year 1939.

Live-births totalled 1075, of which 538 were male and 537 female. 27 births were illegitimate. The birth rate per 1000 of the estimated population is therefore 18.62 compared with a rate of 17.60 for 1939. Still-births numbered 42, giving a rate per 1000 total (live and still) births of 37.6, compared with 39.54 for 1939.

Deaths numbered 824, of which 429 were male and 395 female. This gives a death rate per 1000 of the estimated population of 14.27, which when corrected and adjusted to make it comparable with the death rate of the country and other districts, gives a standardized death rate of 16.55 per 1000 estimated population. The figure for 1939 was 13.19.

The Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age is 72.53 per 1000 live births, whereas the Infant Mortality rate for 1939 was 70.44.

The following table shows the causes of death during 1940.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	M.	F.	Total
1. Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers.	-	-	-
2. Cerebro Spinal Fever.	1	-	1
3. Scarlet Fever.	-	-	-
4. Whooping Cough.	-	5	5
5. Diphtheria.	5	4	9
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory system.	30	27	57
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis.	3	5	8
8. Syphilitic diseases.	2	3	5
9. Influenza.	9	5	14.
10. Measles	-	-	-
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and polio-encephalitis.	-	-	-
12. Acute inf. encephalitis.	1	1	2
13. Cancer of buc, cav and oesoph(m) uterus (f)	5	3	8
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum.	14	3	17
15. Cancer of breast.	-	1	1
16. Cancer of all other sites.	28	24	52
17. Diabetes.	1	8	9
18. Intra cranial vascular lesions	56	47	103
19. Heart disease.	67	90	157
20. Other diseases of circulatory system.	15	18	33
21. Bronchitis.	33	37	75
22. Pneumonia.	35	19	54
23. Other respiratory diseases.	14	8	22
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum.	11	1	12
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years.	5	2	7

CAUSE OF DEATH	M.	F.	Total.
26. Appendicitis.	-	1	1
27. Other digestive diseases.	4	9	13
28. Nephritis.	17	12	29
29. Puerperal and post abort. sepsis.	-	-	-
30. Other maternal causes.	-	-	-
31. Premature Birth.	15	7	22
22. Congenital malformation, birth injuries, infant diseases.	9	8	17
33. Suicide.	1	3	4
34. Road Traffic accidents.	7	1	8
35. Other violent causes.	10	11	21
36. All other causes.	23	42	58
TOTALS	429	395	824

Comparisons of Dudley's statistics with those of England and Wales, and with those of towns with populations over 50,000 show several features of interest. The live-birth rate of Dudley (18.62 per 1000 population) exceeds that of England and Wales (14.6 per 1000) and also exceeds that of the bigger towns (16.0 per 1000). The death rate is also higher, being 16.55 per 1000 in Dudley, and 14.3 per 1000 in the country as a whole and 15.8 in the large towns.

The Infant Mortality rate is high (72 per 1000 live births) compared with 55, the rate for the country, and 61 the rate for the large towns. Dudley's infant mortality rate for 1939 was also high, and while it might be contended that the rate for Dudley has not risen since 1939 to the same extent as the rate for the country as a whole, nevertheless such a rate of infant mortality is to be regretted as being in some degree preventable. It is recognized that neo-natal deaths, i.e. the deaths of infants within the first month of life, are in part due to congenital causes which will probably never be entirely eliminated, but deaths in the later months from infective conditions have increased in number, the chief causes being bronchitis and broncho-pneumonia.

The following table gives the ten chief causes of death in their order.

Causes of death.	Males	Females	Total	% of total deaths
Heart Disease.	67	90	157	19.03
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	56	47	103	12.50
Cancer	47	31	78	9.47
Bronchitis	38	37	75	9.10
Respiratory Tuberculosis	30	27	57	6.92
Pneumonia	35	19	54	6.55
Congenital Debility)				
Congenital Malformations)	24	15	39	4.73
Premature Births)				
Other circulatory diseases	15	18	33	4.01
Violence other than suicide	17	12	29	3.50
Nephritis	17	12	29	3.50

Deaths from Heart Disease have slightly decreased from a percentage of 21 on 1939 to 19.03 in the year under review. Cancer has also decreased Death Rate. In 1939 it composed 11.8 per cent of all deaths, in 1940 it was responsible for 9.47 per cent. The category, intracranial vascular lesions, is a new one designed to include cerebral haemorrhage, thrombosis and such causes of death.

There were no maternal deaths during 1940. The rate for the country as a whole was 2.16 per 1000 total (live and still) births.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Midwifery Service.

The Midwifery Service has now settled down as an essential constituent part of the preventive health services, and the municipal midwives attended 992 domiciliary deliveries during the year. This gives an average of 82.6 cases per year per midwife, and is in my opinion a fair maximum for a year. In rotation they attend the pre-natal clinics. Independent midwives attended 18 deliveries within the borough. This gives a total of 1014 births occurring in the borough the remainder (61) were delivered outside the borough area.

Medical Aid was sought in 366 instances.

Child Welfare.

The total attendances at all Child Welfare Clinics during the year 1940 were as follows.

children under 1 year	16,780
children from 1 - 5 years	4,703
	<hr/>
	21,483

The total attendances for 1939 were 21,964.

Pre-natal and Post-natal Clinics.

These were attended by 756 new patients and this figure gives a percentage of 70.3 of all births registered in Dudley during the year.

These patients made 2477 attendances. The number of patients who reported for post-natal examination was 14. The only change in the arrangements is that a clinic is now held weekly at Netherton instead of once a fortnight.

Institutional Provision for Mothers.

The Rosemary Ednam Home was re-opened and the Maternity and Child Welfare Committee were responsible for 8 admissions. The Public Assistance Committee sent 5 cases into New Cross Institution, Wolverhampton, for confinement.

As in previous years, all complicated obstetric cases were admitted to the Maternity Hospital, Loveday Street, Birmingham, while cases of puerperal pyrexia were sent to the General Hospital, Birmingham.

Sir Beckwith Whitehouse continued as obstetric consultant and Mr. Danby as his deputy.

Difficulties having arisen in connection with the admission of complicated obstetrical and puerperal cases to Birmingham, the House Governor of the Royal Hospital, Wolverhampton was approached with a view to such cases being admitted to this Hospital if no beds were available at Birmingham.

An arrangement was concluded whereby the Royal Hospital's Consultants would be available at an agreed fee for the purpose of visiting any abnormal obstetric case and admitting to Hospital if necessary.

It was also agreed that cases of puerperal sepsis would be admitted without a prior consultation provided accommodation was available.

Maternal Deaths.

According to the Registrar General's Return there were no Maternal deaths during 1940. This must be welcomed as a very satisfactory state of affairs.

The Maternal Mortality rate for England and Wales for 1940 was 2.16 per 1000 total births.

Ear, Nose and Throat Clinic.

Dr. Dean reports that the attendances made by children under 5 totalled 155 and that 10 children were referred for operation.

Dental Work.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The following is the report of Mr. J.D. Nelson, Senior Dental Officer.

"In common with every other branch of the dental service there has been a drop in attendance during the year. It is estimated that 85 sessions have been devoted to this work. Practically every case has attended purely for emergency treatment, such as for tooth-ache and very few indeed have come because they have any desire to maintain their dentitions in good condition. It should be

appreciated that in this service, the majority of the cases treated are referred either by the Medical Officers or the local practitioners and that the attendances are not under our control to any large extent.

Reference to the statistics shows that as usual very little conservative work has been done. This is accounted for first by the fact that the majority of the mouths seen are in too dirty a condition to make fillings a worth-while proposition. Secondly, those people seeking appointments for fillings and those advised to have fillings, seldom keep their appointments for the work to be carried out.

Consideration has been given during the year to the provision of dentures, but it would appear that it is not an appropriate time to introduce such a scheme, during the present disorganised war-time conditions. Further, many of those prenatal and postnatal cases who today require dentures, are the very people who left school (owing to the efforts of the School Dental Service) with sound dentitions. It would therefore appear a more logical idea to extend the dental services (if such a thing were possible) past the school leaving age, to prevent the wastage of work done during the school year and largely to avoid the necessity for dentures.

My personal feelings with regard to M & C W work is that it consists largely of treating conditions which ought never to have arisen. The young mother and expectant mother should require conservative work and not clearance, dentures and extractions. The baby of 3 and 4 should have sound teeth if given proper care and diet, both for himself and to his mother prenatally. Education and the perfection of existing schemes may ultimately attain this ideal.

The following table gives the dental treatment figures for 1940 for mothers and preschool children.

	Dudley	Priory	N'ton	H. Hall	Total
No. of mothers attending	147	53	17	1	218
Subsequent attendances by mothers	61	9	4	2	76
No. of prenatals attending	18	3	8	-	29
Subsequent attendances by prenatals	4	-	1	-	5
No. of preschool children attending	99	31	24	2	156
Subsequent attendances by preschool children	13	6	4	1	24
Total attendances	342	102	58	6	508
Permanent fillings	15	1	-	-	16
Temporary fillings	-	-	-	7	7
Permanent extractions	321	124	48	3	496
Temporary extractions	112	38	24	-	174
Nitrous Oxide Anaesthesia	291	93	44	-	428
Other operations, permanent	25	3	4	-	32
" " temporary	11	3	8	1	23

Mentally Defectives.

Although this work represents the smallest branch of the dental service, even fewer cases than usual were referred for treatment. Two cases only made three attendances, and on each occasion nitrous oxide was administered for the extraction of teeth.

Primary School.

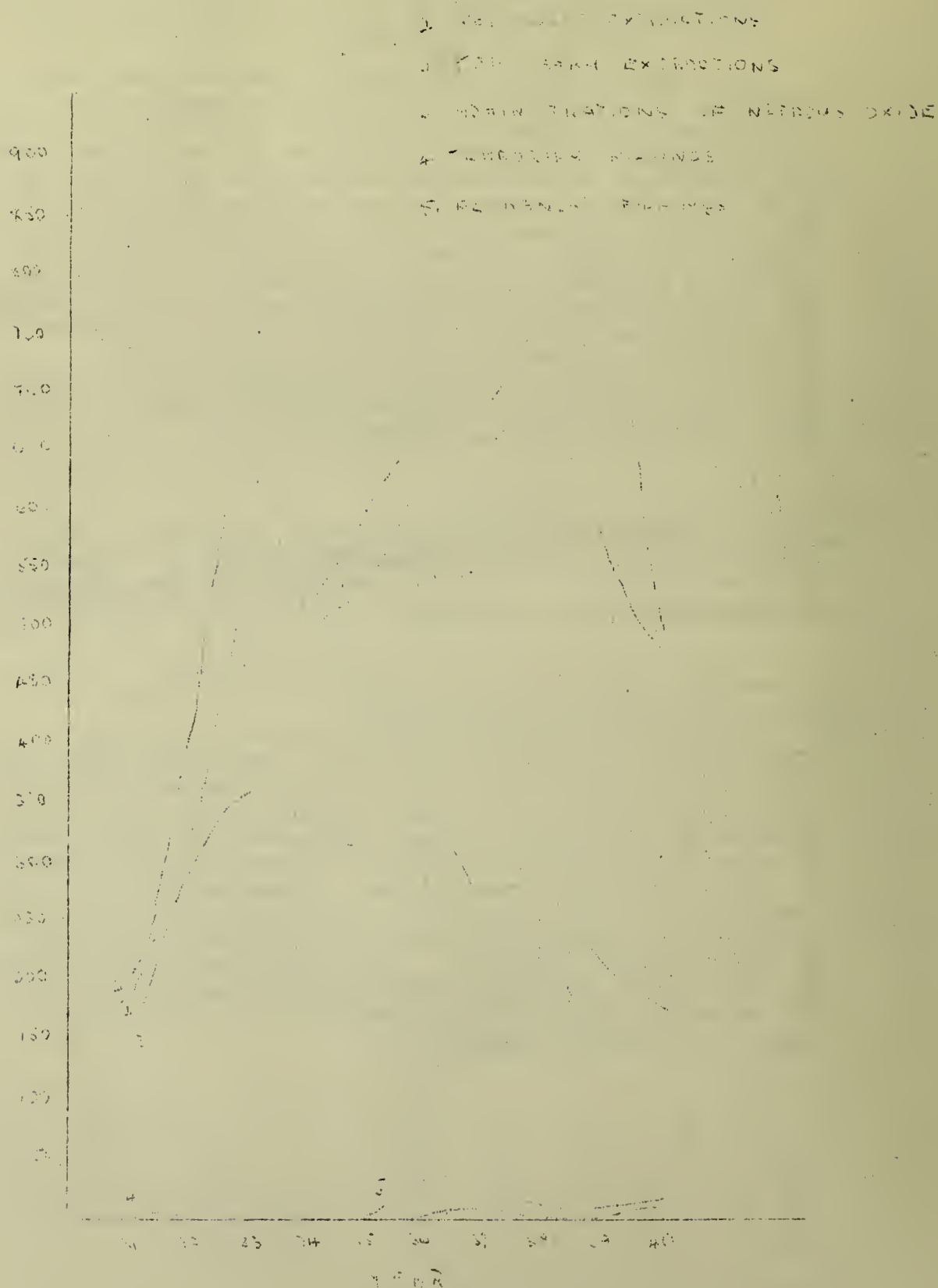
No routine inspection has yet been carried out, although it is hoped that this will be possible in future years. Since the opening of this school, some difficulty has been experienced in inspecting all the elementary schools in the borough in the course of a twelve months. It was not considered desirable to carry out an examination here at the expense of our regular elementary schools. The children, however, appear to be under the observation of the teachers and all those needing urgent treatment have been brought over to the clinic. Sixteen children have made nineteen attendances. Eighteen temporary teeth have been extracted, seventeen administrations of nitrous oxide have been made for the purpose and there have been two other dental operations performed.

Mr. Nelson has also provided an analysis of the dental work done in the years 1931 - 1940 in connection with the Council's Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme. The following is his report.

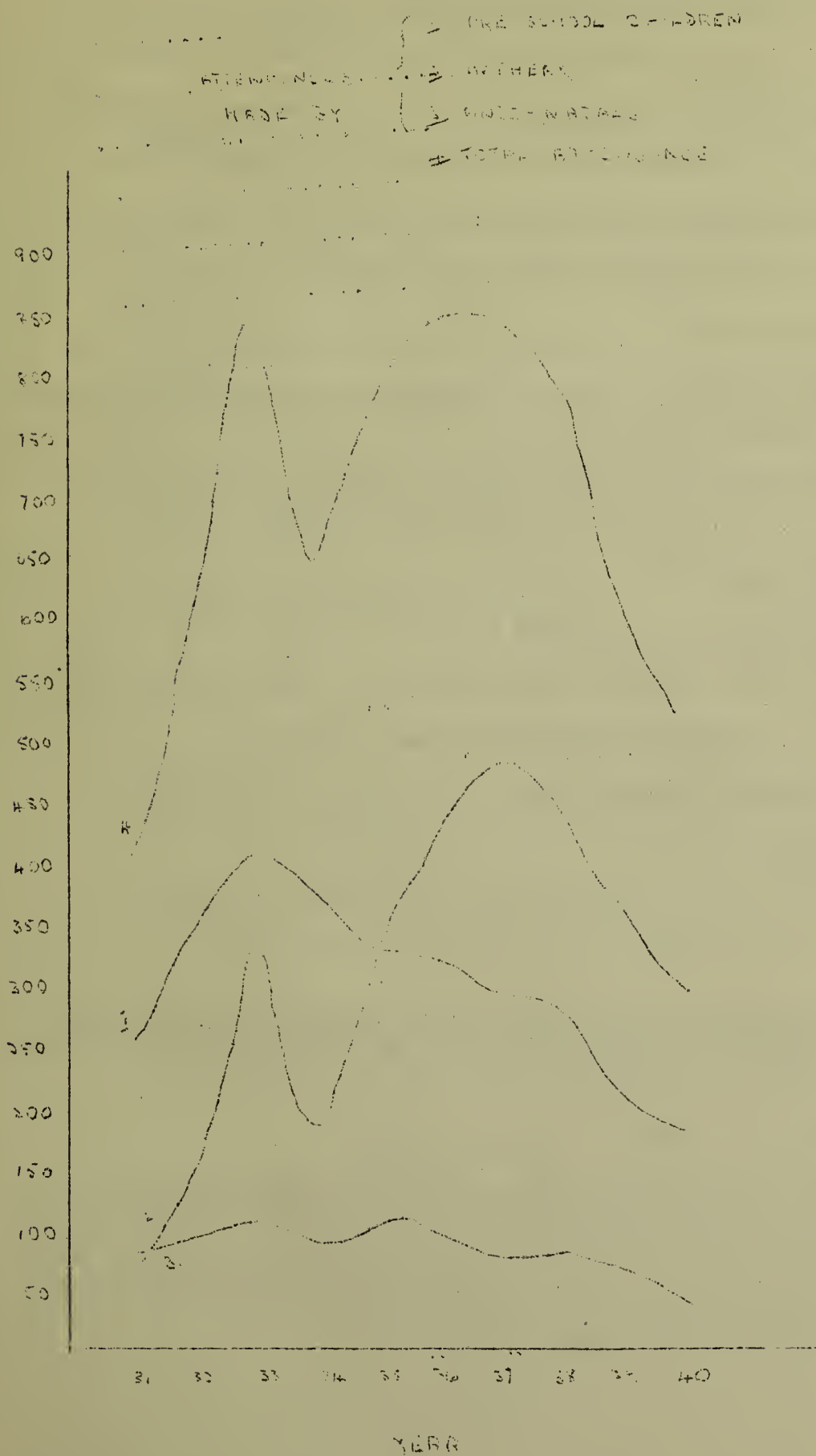
"The dental work in connection with mothers and pre-school children had its official beginning in 1931.

The supply of these patients depends largely on circumstances outside our control, since only those cases referred to us from other departments and practitioners receive treatment. The bulk of the work consists of extractions to clear up gross sepsis and in the majority of cases fillings are definitely contr-indicated owing to the filthy mouth conditions. More conservative work could be done, but bearing in mind the long waiting list we always have amongst school children, it would have to be done at their expense. Improved working conditions in the clinics may make it possible to increase the output but meanwhile conservative work for the school children shows the greatest profit.

Analysis of Extractions, Fillings & Anaesthetics for Maternity & Child Welfare Cases from beginning of year, 1931.



Analysis of Maternity & Child Welfare Attendances at Dental Clinic from beginning of Scheme, 1931.



Health Nurses' Work.

Visits to children under 1 year of age.

a) First Visits 950

b) Total Visits 5608

Visits to children between 1 & 5 years 9937

Pre-natal visits 295

Stillbirth investigations 29

Infant death investigations 74

Ophthalmia neonatorum visits 13

Miscellaneous visits 1342

The number and types of cases attending the orthopaedic clinic were as follows :-

Non-Tubercular affections.

	<u>Old</u>	<u>New</u>
Paralysis	-	7
Rickets	3	7
Congenital deformities	3	4
Deformities of feet	15	14
Other conditions	5	6

Total attendances 262

Tubercular affections.

Spinal disease	1
Others	-

Total attendances 7

The total attendances made at the Ultra Violet Light Clinic were 447, conditions treated being rickets, debility, bronchitis and alopecia.

National Milk Scheme.

In operation from 1st July. Supplies milk either free or at 2d a pint to all expectant and nursing mothers and children under 5 years.

In September, 1940, arrangements were made with the Milk Officer whereby National Dried Milk would be distributed at the Welfare Clinics.

Dr. Brodie, one of the Ministry of Health's Regional Medical Officers, and Miss Bryant, carried out an inspection of the Council's Maternity and Child Welfare Services on 11th, 12th and 13th April, 1940 and while expressing general satisfaction with the existing services, made certain recommendations for increasing their scope, viz.

- 1). A weekly prenatal clinic at Netherton in place of the fortnightly one held hitherto.
This has been put into operation.
- 2). The establishment of a consultative prenatal clinic to be held by Sir Beckwith Whitehouse, the Council's Consultative Obstetrician.
- 3). Staffing of Prenatal clinics by Midwives on rota.
This arrangement has been put into operation and works extremely well and releases one health nurse at each clinic for other work.
- 4). Home Nursing of Cases of Puerperal Pyrexia by District Nurses.
The Matron and Honorary Secretary of the Badley District Nurses' Home have been approached regarding the possibility of the District Nurses being used for nursing cases of miscarriage which developed pyrexia and also for cases of puerperal pyrexia which are not serious enough to warrant removal to hospital.
It has now been agreed that the District Nurses should do this work and a fee of 2/6d per visit will be paid by the Local Authority.
The scheme has been put into operation in 1941.
- 5). Maternity Home Accommodation.
The closing of the Rosemary Ednam Home at the beginning of the war led to great difficulties in securing Maternity Home Accommodation for expectant mothers. Dr. Brodie promised to take the matter up with the Staffordshire County Council.
- 5) Provision of dentures for expectant and nursing mothers.
This has not proved to be a practicable proposition.
- 7). Additional Ultra Violet Light clinic at Netherton.
A suitable lamp has been purchased, and commencement has been made in 1941.

Nursing Homes.

An application was received during the year for registration of premises as a Maternity Home. The Council made an order refusing the application on the grounds that the premises were unsuitable.

Laboratory Arrangements.

The following examinations were made at the laboratory at The Firs.

Diphtheria swabs	290
Sputum for T.B.	30
Ringworm	-

Total	<u>320</u>
-------	------------

Urinés 8

Care of Mental Defectives.

Towards the end of 1940. the occupation centre had not resumed on account of unsuitable premises unprovided with shelter accommodation and it was proposed by the Board of Control that a trial might be made of a system of Home Training. I advised against this on account of the fact that it in no way provides any nearly adequate substitute for an occupation centre. It was tried out however and discovered to be no substitute whatsoever. On further appeal to the Board of Control, the former Infants Department of Wolverhampton Street schools was allowed to be used as a centre and the defectives are now very happily housed and catered for there.

The following table gives the annual figures as furnished to the Board of Control

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
1). Under Statutory Supervision	29	34	63
Of whom, awaiting removal to an Institution	-	3	3
2). Reported to the Local Authority from any reliable source and recognised by them as mentally defective, but as to whom no action under the Mental Deficiency Acts has been taken :-			
a) Children between the ages of 14 and 16 years		Nil	
b) All other cases	13	20	33
Of whom, number if any, under voluntary supervision	13	20	33
3). Number of above cases on the registers of Occupation and Industrial Centres :-			
Under Statutory Supervision	6	17	23
Under Voluntary Supervision	2	1	3
On Licence from Institutions ...	-	-	-
Under Guardianship		2	2
On Licence from Guardianship ..	-	-	-

Blind

The following report has been submitted by Mr. Chamberlann, the Secretary of the Wolverhampton, Dudley and Districts Institution for the Blind, on the work among Dudley Blind persons.

Registration.

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Children at School.	1	1	2
Home Workers	-	1	1
Workshop Employees.	4	3	7
Institution Pianoforte Tuner	1	-	1
Institution Gardener	1	-	1
Employed Elsewhere	1	-	1
Mental and other cases in Institutions	2	2	4
Unemployable	<u>35</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>78</u>
	<u>45</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>95</u>

Employment.

There are nine Dudley blind persons employed at the Institution. The earnings of these workers are based on Trades' Union or other recognised rates, and as a compensation for the handicap of blindness each employee receives a weekly augmentation (and if married a dependent's allowance) in addition. This augmentation is based on a scale of 22s. 6d per week for men and 20s per week for women. A war bonus based on the cost of living index was introduced in January 1940.

The occupations in which blind people are employed at the Workshops are :-

Basket making;	chair seating;
Brush making;	Pianoforte tuning and
Machine and hand knitting;	repairing;
Gardening;	Mat making;

Dudley blind workers are employed as follows :-

Basket makers 3, Brush maker 1, Machine knitter 1,
Chair seater 1, Pianoforte Tuner 1, Mat maker 1, Gardener 1.

Home Workers.

There is one blind person resident in Dudley included in the Institution Home Workers' Scheme. This worker receives a weekly augmentation of 17s 6d per week, plus war bonus.

Home Teaching and Visiting.

Nearly 2,000 visits have been made by the Institution Home Teacher to unemployable blind persons in their homes. Through the medium of this service the individual needs of all blind persons are brought to the notice of the institution.

All capable of being taught are given instruction in Braille and Moon reading and writing, and also in simple home occupations.

Social activities have been continued, but in order to avoid the possibility of danger in war time from congregating blind people the social centres at the People's Mission Room and at King Street Congregational Church Room have been closed. In place of the usual annual outing, short distance trips for limited numbers have taken place. These restrictions have been greatly mourned by the blind people, and in face of popular demand the Institution is endeavouring to enlarge the scope of its social work in Dudley.

Augmentation of Income.

The income of unemployable blind persons is augmented on a basis of £1 per week. Under the scheme, which includes the benefits arising for the passing of the Blind Persons Act, 1938, and the provision of a special war-time allowance, 48 blind persons receive grants. The scheme is administered by the Institution on behalf of the Town Council.

The Institution Committee gratefully acknowledge the help and co-operation extended by the Town Council in the improved financial conditions for the blind in the purchase of goods made by the blind workers, and in the work for the blind of Dudley generally.

Venereal Diseases

The following is a report on the work carried out in the Venereal Diseases Clinic during 1940.

The number of new patients was 165, these making 5,175 attendances. 523 serological tests were performed at the County Bacteriological Laboratory, Stafford, and 285 bacteriological examinations were made at the Clinic.

The number of injections given for the treatment of syphilis was 1998.

101 patients were discharged after completion of treatment and final tests of cure. 17 defaulted before completion of treatment and 7 after completion of treatment but before final tests of cure. 26 cases were transferred to other centres.

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The following table summarises the incidence of the principal notifiable diseases during the past 5 years.

	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Scarlet Fever	126	67	48	104	78
Diphtheria	104	98	104	54	70
Puerperal Pyrexia	5	7	9	9	6
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	5	9	11	8	5
Pneumonia	69	69	114	56	74
Erysipelas	21	23	24	16	9
Encephalitis Lethargica	-	-	1	-	1
Enteric	-	-	-	2	3
Anterior Poliomyelitis	2	-	-	-	3
Polioencephalitis	2	-	-	-	-
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	2	1	-	2	8
Whooping Cough	Not notifiable			4	158
Measles	Not notifiable			2	88

Immunization against diphtheria was done to a limited extent during the year, 148 children having been immunized. Circumstances have permitted a much greater amount of this work being done in 1941 and well over 2000 school and pre-school children have been treated since February, 1941.

The incidence of diphtheria is somewhat higher than last year, but scarlet fever has declined considerably.

Disinfection of premises following infectious disease was done in 236 instances.

Twenty-five cases of Tuberculosis were notified for the first time during the year, compared with 62 in 1939. Seven deaths from Tuberculosis were recorded of cases not previously notified.

Provision for cases of Infectious Disease.

On the 1st February 1940 the agreement between Dudley Corporation and the Wolverhampton Corporation whereby the latter proposed to extend the Wolverhampton Isolation Hospital and to provide additional beds for Dudley cases was terminated. The Wolverhampton corporation continued the current arrangement whereby Dudley cases are admitted if beds are available.

The general arrangements for the reception of cases of infectious disease arising in the Borough continued to be unsatisfactory and great difficulty has been experienced on many occasions in getting accommodation for our patients. This should be remedied in large measure by the inclusion of Dudley as a constituent member of the West Midlands Joint Hospital Board and the use by that Board of Moxley Hospital.

